



## CHATEAU MONTELENA

ESTABLISHED 1882

# 2014 Napa Valley Chardonnay

### Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton, July 2016

#### INTRODUCTION

The 2014 vintage was sunny, just warm enough, and bountiful – the fundamental, or at least superficial, criteria for a “great” vintage. The truth, naturally, is more complex and, while no one ever complains about beautiful weather and a bumper crop, we tend to look at vintage characteristics a bit differently. If there are good or great vintages, then there necessarily must be bad vintages and I think these sorts of blanket statements are hyperbole at best. Just as any good chef will tell you that nature doesn’t make bad ingredients, we see the trends, challenges and idiosyncrasies of each vintage as an opportunity to decode our soil, our vineyard, and our region through the lens of our fruit. It’s this perspective and our inherent intellectual or creative curiosity that sets us apart as the details and nuances of each growing season are what make each year special and unique in its own right, and thus the final wines “great.”

#### VINTAGE WEATHER

After a dry winter and mild spring, we did get one substantial rain event before budbreak to saturate the soil profile for the beginning of the growing season. However, drought conditions dominated overall necessitating precise applications of water, which allowed the vines to maintain sufficient stress but still ripen slowly and methodically throughout the summer warmth. The temperatures remained relatively cool at night propelling harvest to an early but not record-setting start as all of the Chardonnay was picked over a roughly two week period from late August to early September.

#### NOSE

Ripe peach, pear and cloves dominate the nose amidst a flurry of floral and honeysuckle notes.

#### PALATE

There’s a wonderful fullness and weight on the palate punctuated by ripe melon, green apple, and fresh citrus. The oak contribution remains subtle with a hint of vanilla and baking spice.

#### FINISH

The density of the wine is readily apparent as grilled pineapple, lychee, and a rich creaminess linger.

### Technical Information

#### HARVEST DATES

August 25 to September 8, 2014

#### ALCOHOL

13.6%

#### BLEND

100% Chardonnay

#### BARREL AGING

10 months in French Oak

#### BOTTLING DATE

July 27 to August 7, 2015

#### RELEASE DATE

October 1, 2016

#### WINEMAKER

Matt Crafton